



Bristol Safeguarding  
Children Board

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## Forced marriage

A forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both spouses do not consent to the marriage but are coerced into it. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. In the cases of some adults at risk who lack the capacity to consent, coercion is not required for a marriage to be forced. Forced marriage is not a religious or cultural issue - it is abuse of human rights under the Forced Marriage Act of 2007.

There is a difference between a forced marriage and an arranged marriage. In arranged marriages, the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage, but the choice of whether or not to accept the arrangement still remains with the prospective spouses.

[Statutory Guidance for Multi-Agency Professionals \(2014\)](#) is available together with local guidance which can be accessed on the [South West Child Protection Procedures](#). The Foreign and Commonwealth Office provides further information and resources for professionals protecting, advising and supporting (possible) victims of Forced Marriage.

## Honour Based Violence

Honour based violence is a collection of practices, which are used to control behaviour within families or other social groups to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or honour. Such violence can occur when perpetrators perceive that a relative has shamed the family and / or community by breaking their honour code.

It can be distinguished from other forms of violence, as it is as it is often committed with some degree of approval and/or collusion from family and/or community members. Women, men and younger members of the family can all be involved in the abuse.

Honour based violence manifests itself in a diverse range of ways with children and young people, including forced marriage, domestic and/or sexual violence, rape, physical assaults, harassment, kidnap, threats of violence (including murder), or witnessing violence directed towards a sibling or indeed another family member and female genital mutilation.

[Protocol on the handling of 'so-called' Honour Based Violence/Abuse and Forced Marriage Offences between the National Police Chiefs' Council and the Crown Prosecution Service](#) is available for further advice together with local guidance that is available on the [South West Child Protection Procedures](#).

## Further Information and Support

[Karma Nirvana](#) is a National Charity that supports both men and women who are victims of Forced Marriage and Honour Based Abuse. It runs a national helpline offering direct support and guidance to victims and professionals. Karma Nirvana provides training to the Police, NHS and Social Services.



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They can act as expert witnesses in court, speak out in schools and attend awareness raising events nationally and internationally.

Helpline: 0800 5999247

[Bristol Violence against Women](#) (BAVA) is a forum in Bristol working to end all types of violence and abuse against women and girls and domestic and sexual violence against men. Their website provides information and resources about different types of violence and abuse and support services that can help. There is also information on how to help others and how to raise awareness of violence and abuse.

[National Domestic Violence Helpline](#) – The Freephone 24 Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline, run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge, is a national service for women experiencing domestic violence, their family, friends, colleagues and others calling on their behalf. Translation facilities for callers whose first language is not English, and a service for callers who are deaf or hard of hearing are available Helpline: 0808 2000 247

EMAIL: [helpline@womensaid.org.uk](mailto:helpline@womensaid.org.uk)

[MixTogether](#) is a support network that helps mixed couples (mixed race/ religion/ caste) to overcome opposition from family or community to their relationship.